

Regional Meeting Report #1

Virginia State Preparedness Report (SPR) Project
Regional Meeting, Region VII
Hampton Inn Hotel
Alexandria, VA; Nov 27, 2007

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Period: Nov 27, 2007
Project: A702-025

Purpose: The following information is presented in bullet format, by breakout group, without supporting information or additional comment. The purpose of this report is to provide the program managers with a snap shot of the regions' current capabilities and accomplishments and recommended targets and initiatives for the future.

The comments are presented without attribution to a particular agency or individual.

Enhance Regional Collaboration:

Current status or accomplishments –

- The Region VII jurisdictions are truly thinking and operating as a region.
- The jurisdictions' first responsibility is to their own city or county citizens, but they are always concerned about how their proposed decisions or actions will impact on their neighbors.
- The Council of Governments (COG) and other regional organizations are maturing and becoming stronger and displaying more of a "governance" capability.
- There is a concern with the lack of engagement of the private sector in the preparedness planning programs.
- There is a concern that colleges and universities in the region are now competitors for preparedness planning assistance.
- The Fairfax CAO elected to fund a Prince George County, Maryland, project.
- Funding in Prince George County upgraded the county's radio communications.
- Metropolitan Planning Organization – transportation and planning – The past 5 or 6 years, has crossed to Public Safety. Has given structure to all responders of an emergency and mirrors resource to support the NRP. This is a model for the country.
- Region 7 is "there" regionally, not just locally.

2010 Targets and Initiatives:

- 2010 – Encourage/invite and integrate the private sector into emergency preparedness activities - planning, training, and exercises.
- 2010 – Expand the Fusion Center concept into a regional intelligence and analysis center which incorporates Fire, EMS, Public Health, Emergency Management and

Transportation into the intelligence and law enforcement information sharing networks.

- Address the security clearance issue that hampers the intelligence collaboration operation – there are not enough “cleared” personnel spaces in the system.
- Enhance the Fire Service CAD – Computer Aided Dispatch – There is a delay in coordinating responses that cross boundaries. There is a need to be able to view neighboring jurisdictions dispatches and status.
- Create a GIS template – There needs to be a Commonwealth model for critical technologies. The GIS System, in particular, needs standards for entering data. There needs to be a platform common to the entire Commonwealth.
- CAP WIND System – Is still being funded. This system can see other jurisdictions. Want to see this system more regional.
- The Commonwealth needs to work toward standardizing emergency plans (create templates) and standardize the organization and operation of emergency operations centers (EOCs).
- The Commonwealth needs to strengthen communications and resource capability in rural localities to bring them more in line with the urban locality capabilities.
- The Commonwealth needs to create “sister” urban evacuation areas in rural jurisdictions.
- Creation of a regional intelligence and analysis gathering center to incorporate Fire, EMS, Public Health, EM and Transportation.
- Expand partnerships with private sector organizations.
- The state needs to streamline its structure. It doesn’t reflect how the locals are operating.
- By 2015 ask the Feds to “get their act together”. Possibly put VDEM under OCP?
- “Bring the entities together”. State functions aren’t working well together.

Enhance Communication Capabilities:

Current Status and Accomplishments -

- Region VII jurisdictions are communicating and operating together across locality boundaries – communications systems are able to interface with one another. Police, fire, hospitals, and dispatch centers are current examples of regional interoperability.
- Additional funding is needed for communications equipment, current equipment is quickly obsolete, and technology is not being used to its potential.
- STARS system is partially compatible. Good for the State police but that’s it.
- More attention needs to be given to backup systems and alternate communications capability if/when primary systems are down.
- Emergency Alert systems in place include Reverse 911, satellite or XM radio, television, Roam Secure, and cellular text messaging.
- EOC is easily accessible.
- Modes of public communication are SMS messages, next generation 911 and wireless calls.

Future Initiatives -

- The wireless side of communications is the area that future emergency communications should be focused on.
- Expand amateur radio (RACES) capability as a backup to primary systems – invite RACES to participate in training and exercises.
- Emergency Management has a secured satellite system with capabilities, but needs to be interoperable.
- Video conferencing and teleconferencing – needs regional coordination.
- Needs to be hardening of sites – what happens when things go down.
- Amateur radios in need of repair with responsibility put on citizens.
- Funding needed for communications.
- Technology needs to be used to its highest potential.
- Construction of an EOC needs to be hardened.
- Jurisdictions need backups like satellite communications, Direct TV, private sector MSV, Emergency Alert Center.
- Implement college awareness emergency communications.
- Implement text messaging – Alert Tracker
- Methods of communication need to be strong and implemented.
- Set standards for all messaging services region wide. Enforcement needs help from state to force carriers to send emergency alert messages.
- Needs to be an overhaul of the national message system.
- Roam security alerts – Carriers dropping signals needs to be fixed.
- Emergency awareness needs to focus on the wireless side of communication.
- Encourage legislature to push carriers to get out information.
- A multi channel network is needed.

Enhance CBRNE Detection, Response, and Decontamination:

Current Status and Accomplishments –

- Basic equipment given to officers is improved but limited. No certificates.
- Procedures on how to use equipment has improved.
- OEM is looking at their standardization procedures.
- New units – Divisions
- Development of an emergency website.

Future Initiatives -

- Better training of officers in the use of equipment and decontamination which is likely a huge expense.
- Need to improve prioritization.
- Need for more protective equipment supplies (PPE).
- Need of more reserve storage space for equipment.
- Maintain replacement equipment training. State, Federal and county level has improved.
- More time and money needed for training.
- Improvement in the area of Public Health capacity. Can't care for all or as many.
- Need to find a place for injured people after the effects take hold.
- Need for full time positions. Fear of bringing new hires on because they don't know what to do with them, or they become trained and leave for better jobs.

- Police fix – Need a manager or person for CBRNE to handle everything.
- Create a training day.
- Would like to see video training or on-line training. Better than trying to train 40 people with one instructor.
- Provide check sheets.
- Need for more people for each department/division.
- Need for guidelines.
- Fairfax Police would like to see the Grants process streamlined and people hired to manage the grants process.
- Promote better info sharing.
- Need for full ESF involvement.
- Need the County Managers' commitment.
- Control of Federal and State spending.

Enhance Planning and COOP:

Current Status and Accomplishments –

- Hazards Assessment/Resource Management – Statewide planning
- Recovery – NCR Management Plan has been written.
- Operations – Multiple Disciplines Planning
- Evacuation Planning – greatest accomplishment is in regions with the most participation.
- Local jurisdictional planning exists.
- Region 7 has completed the MRS.
- CBRNE is completed. The process began in 2005. Arlington began in 2003.
- Resources are available for jurisdictions to include NFEPA 1600 EX
- Planners are collaborating with each other to compile the same information and get a lot accomplished.
- The Cities Readiness Initiative is fully funded through (CDC) medical.

Future Initiatives -

- More needs to be accomplished in the area of continuity.
- Evacuation planning is under funded.
- There is a lack of planning assessments.
- Local jurisdictional planning is not funded regionally.
- Develop plans for improvement in the areas of understanding weaknesses and gaps.
- Improve upon operationalizing jurisdictional Plans.
- Evacuation process needs to be more efficient beginning with local planning.
- COOP Planning – Local as well as jurisdictional.
- Local planning efforts need to be supported.
- Needs to be one Planner/Planning Assistant in each jurisdiction.
- Unite local plans to increase operational reports.
- Planning – Operating the state requirements SR-EOP
- Funding – For full time planners or consultants by 2010-2011.
- Needs improvement in the area of planning nationwide.
- Need for planning at the medical level.

- Need for sufficient Planning resources.
- Planning must begin at the local level in order to improve for 2010.
- There must be agreement on the objectives and resources for the objectives.
- The state needs to bring representatives from every region to decide where the state needs to go.
- The state needs to designate funds to regions in order to accomplish their least accomplished goal.
- There needs to be more specific funding in lieu of generalized funding.
- Support planning needs to meet every standard.
- NFPA 1600 Standards Plans Objective – Resource Management, special needs, NIMS.
- Planning Teams need to be formed on a regional basis to develop a workable product, have a home for Planning Districts, education, economic development and health.
- An inner-disciplinary Planning Team needs to create some capability.
- There is a need for an ESF (planning) discipline.
- There should be more COOP planning beginning at the local level and then progressing to the regional level.
- Planning must have resources available to local levels to meet NFPA 1600 Standards.
- Prefer one (1) Planner in each jurisdiction/one (1) consultant/one (1) employee. One (1) per region is not working.
- Not willing to settle for less than the best funding for a full time consultant through 2010-2011.
- There are not enough Planners available.
- Priorities are response driven. If you buy into local Plans, you need to work with regional Planners.
- Agree on all (planning) efforts statewide.
- Funding needs to be priority driven.
- Develop workable “Templates” for planning products.
- Beyond 2010 planning should be an ongoing process.
- There needs to be Planning Teams on a regional basis.
- Validate the Plan, exercise the Plan, maintain the Plan.
- A Plan is always ongoing. Plan, train, exercise, plan again, and repeat the cycle.
- Planning needs to be continuous and plans need to be exercised.
- Long term planning is a cycle and must be constant.
- Provide for planning, proper funding and exercises.
- The state can validate locality needs by reading the reports ASAP.

Evacuation, Shelter-in-Place, Mass Care (Shelter and Feeding):

Current Status and Accomplishments -

Evacuation –

- NOVA evacuation plan draft
- NCR evacuation document
- Local plans in coordination with NOVA
- Special needs registry (Fairfax web link)

- Fairfax distributed DVD's with shelter in place information

Shelter -

- State shelter survey of NOVA facilities (state shelter plan)
- Local sheltering plans
- UASI grant planner for all NOVA localities
Mass care MMRS
- Red Cross trailers
- Red Cross agreements w/ jurisdictions

Communication -

- Extensive public communication systems are in place

Shelter in place -

- Public information distributed on planning accomplished
- Established logistical distribution sites

Future Targets – 2010 Goals

- All regional evacuation/mass care plans complete, synchronized and exercised
- Identify resources to be enhanced to support mass care and evacuation (example: roadway/shelters/PPE/communication)
- Increase the number of volunteers and sustain NIMS training of volunteers and 1st responders
- Provide better support for the special needs population

Steps/Initiatives to accomplish future targets/goals

- All regional mass care/evac plans completed, synchronized and exercised
Catalogue existing plans and assess conflict
Resolve conflicts and develop resolution between NCR and NOVA plan
Develop a plan for evacuation corridor hwy improvements and needs
Strengthen and improve single message before, during and after
Regional exercises 1x year minimum
Develop plan for mass care medical backup support exceeding 1, 000
Develop regional plan for shelter of 1st responders
Support FEMA regions III evacuation planning
- Identify resources enhanced to support mass care and evacuation (example roadway/shelters/PPE communication)
Generators-increase grants and funding to purchase more
Required volunteer personnel
Stock local and state transfer points with food and water for 5,000 people each
Establish advanced MOU's with privately owned hwy for control and use during evacuation.
Fund minimum of one functional approved state shelter
- Increase # of volunteers
Sustain NIMS training of volunteers and 1st responders
Recruit/train/exercise periodically/frequently
Incorporate evacuation/mass care in existing exercises
- Better support special needs population:

Require VA insurance companies to reimburse localities for review and approval of private health and child care facilities and require annual exercises.
All localities required to exercise school lockdown and shelter in place annually
Identify and quantify special needs
Incentive to register
Media campaign target special need population and families
See private sector sponsors/partners
Train 1st responders and include plan, policy, and procedure
Improve state fire code to require building owners adequate resources to evacuate special needs populations

Critical Resources and Distribution:

This breakout group was under-represented and the participants were added to another group.